

# MISSING FORM EDUCATION POLICY FOR COMMUNITY ED C.I.C & COMMUNITY ED ACADEMY



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Version	2
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**Standard Statement Aim:**

Community Ed C.I.C. ensures the maintenance of a culture in which children rarely go missing. If they do, they return quickly to ensure that they are protected as much as possible and respond positively to the staff upon their return.

**Introduction**

The Headteacher and Operational Director ensure that there is a strong emphasis on establishing positive relationships with children and young people while promoting positive choices. This provides a solid foundation for developing and fostering resilience and self-confidence. Community Ed C.I.C delivers a clear, consistent message to everyone involved that they are a valued, important part of our provision.

By developing our ethos and creating an environment in which children and young people feel secure and safe, we are attempting to minimise the risk of them going missing.

**Underpinning Ethos / Practice**

An essential part of Community Ed C.I.C is our ethos and values: actively enabling children and young people to understand the risks and dangers of running away or going missing. The Headteacher and Operational Director ensure this ethos is evident across our provision so that staff and students can identify how to stay safe and know there are procedures in place to protect them. Students receive support and have daily routines and boundaries; they are aware of how to seek help, and once settled, they enjoy education in an environment where they feel part of and valued.

In many instances, staff can adopt a proactive approach to prevent young people from running away or going missing. Staff should be acutely aware of and familiar with individual triggers and group dynamics. They should recognise the benefits of using activities to positively engage with young people, which will help them gain insight into what will work with each young person to deter them from going missing.

The Behaviour Management section of the Behaviour Policy identifies individualised interruptive strategies that are relevant for each child or young person in an effort to prevent them from running away or going missing. These plans and procedures should be as comprehensive and extensive as possible.

All students have an individual risk assessment that is updated regularly. Individual risk assessments must be applied to activity risk assessments to help prevent any educational incidents from occurring.

It is unacceptable for staff to do nothing. They must understand that they have a duty of care to prevent a child or young person from leaving the building when it can be demonstrated that doing so would put them at immediate risk—for example, getting into a stranger's waiting car outside. Staff must not use any method to prevent a child or young person from leaving the building that would adversely impact other children or young people at the provision. One inappropriate method would be temporarily locking the door while other children or young people are inside.

**On discovering that a child is missing during school hours, the following procedures will be followed:**

- The Headteacher/Operational Director and safeguarding lead will be informed, and an incident form will be opened with the time recorded of where and when the child was last seen.
- Parents/Carers and partner school (if applicable) will be informed immediately.
- The support staff will go into the community and actively look for the student.
- Classmates and friends will be asked about the child's whereabouts, and any relevant information will be noted, including where and when the child was last seen.
- Verify with the relevant teacher or teaching assistant and register.
- Check with the records for any further information from telephone enquiries.
- Check if the child's individual risk assessment and deemed level of vulnerability.
- A support worker will organise and coordinate a thorough search of the premises.
- A search will be conducted within 5 minutes of the initial absence report. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will extract personal files on the child, and a recent photograph will be available.
- After 20 minutes, the police and the Norfolk/Suffolk Children Safeguarding Board will be informed if appropriate.
- If a child is considered more vulnerable, then the police will be informed immediately
- Parents/carers or the person with parental responsibility will be updated,

**A complete list of rules regarding missing from education is visible around the building, helping students understand the consequences and encouraging them to make positive choices.**

**If a child goes missing while off-site:**

Staff will stay with student/s while off-site, using mobile phones to coordinate with the school/AP. Should a child go out of sight from a member of staff, that child will instantly be considered as missing from education, and the following procedure will take place:

- An immediate headcount will be carried out to ensure that all the other children are present.
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity.
- The remaining children will be taken back.
- Inform the Headteacher/Operational Director and/or Safeguarding Lead by mobile phone.  
The Headteacher or Operational Director will ring the child's parents/ carers or person responsible for them and explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion.
- If at a venue, contact the venue Manager and arrange a search.
- If not found in 20 minutes, Contact the Police. ( if a child is considered more vulnerable then contact sooner).
- The Safeguarding Lead would inform the Norfolk/Suffolk Children Safeguarding Board if appropriate.
- Community Ed will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- An incident report and written documentation will be fed back to the Chair of Governors.

Students attending the AP and Community Ed Academy will follow the above process. When attending the AP as a day placement and not on the roll with Community Ed Academy, the following procedures also need to be applied.

- When a student attending the AP and their place is commissioned by a school or directly with the Local Authority, the school's DSL or LA representative will be informed and updated accordingly.
- The DSL from Community Ed will maintain close communication with the DSL from the partner school, and they will decide who will contact and update parents/carers.
- The Operational Director will then notify the Chair of Governors to support best practices and modify policies where appropriate.

Children and young people must feel welcomed back after a period of absence. They need to see that the staff are relieved they have returned and are eager to ensure their safety and well-being, responding swiftly to any medical or additional assistance required. Staff should offer the child or young person something to eat and a warm drink.

### **Monitoring / Review**

Community Ed C.I.C. must maintain a central record of all missing child/young person incidents and a more detailed version kept in each child / young person's file.

An enhanced Individual Risk Assessment and the students' Behaviour Management Plan will be updated, and a plan will be agreed upon to avoid it happening again. A professional meeting, including parents/carers, will be sought to establish a way forward using the Keeping Children Safe in Education Legislation 2024 to enable an inclusive curriculum for the students concerned.

The Operational Director will ensure that monthly and quarterly monitoring of individual children / young people and outcomes assessed are completed.

An incident form will feed into the new curriculum programme. This will allow individual targets to be set, as well as one-to-one work and group lessons, helping to address barriers and prevent future incidents.

### **Absent from school/provision**

Attendance is recorded daily at the AP and Community Ed Academy. If a student is absent from the AP, the partner school or LA representative will be informed when the student fails to arrive; it is then their responsibility to safeguard that child.

At Community Ed Academy, the secretary will contact the home before 10 a.m. to establish the reason for the absence and reassure the school that the student is safe. If we have not heard from the parent or carer by lunchtime, the secretary will keep trying to make contact. If the school does not hear from the parents or the student by the end of the day, a home visit will occur that afternoon.

Attendance percentages are shared with professionals and parents to maximise inclusion; please see the Admissions and Attendance Policy in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 for further guidance.

Action plans will be developed, and our enrichment team will be available to parents and carers to help students attend our school or provision regularly. Patterns of students' absences will be studied to help address issues at home and school.